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PREFACE.

THE reception which this new Series of Tracts has met with from the public during the first year of its existence, leaves no room for doubt that it meets a real and widely-felt need. Its purpose is to show the strong, impregnable foundations of the Christian religion, to explain and defend its doctrinal and ethical contents, and prove the authenticity and credibility of its sacred books; so that the doubts and difficulties which are felt by so many, in all classes of society, in the present day, may be removed, and the faith of Christians may be confirmed.

Christian Theism furnishes the most rational account of the origin of the universe, and the proved facts of science do not conflict with any of the fundamental facts or truths of Christianity. The most searching study of the primitive history and religions of the most ancient races and nations tends more and more to confirm the truth of the sacred records.

The unique and divine character of Christianity is made more clearly manifest the more carefully and impartially its rise, spread, and results are compared with those of other religions. Rightly understood, its doctrines and ethics commend themselves alike to the enlightened intellect and conscience, and are adapted to the whole nature and

life of man; while upon the personality and character of its Founder its claims may be rested with absolute confidence. None of the non-theistic systems that find favour with so many in the present day can meet man's need or be a substitute for Christianity.

These are the positions which these Tracts will maintain and defend. Some of them have been discussed in the Tracts already published. It is hoped that the Series will cover the whole ground thus marked out ere it has run its course. Writers whose names are a guarantee for a discussion of the various topics indicated, adequate to the subjects, and adapted to the needs of the times we live in, have given and promised their assistance; and the hope is confidently cherished that, with the blessing of God, the Series, as it is more and more fully developed, may find increasing favour with all classes, and be the means of convincing many unsettled, and confirming many believing minds, while conclusively showing that so far from the world having outgrown Christianity, the one paramount need of the world in every age is to come more fully and universally under its transforming and purifying power.

May, 1883.

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